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C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 7171

PASS HUD OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ECE, SOCI, UR, IS

SUBJECT: ECE - HOUSING, BUILDING AND PLANNING COMMITTEE:

ISRAELI PARTICIPATION IN STUDY TOUR IN USSR

1. SUMMARY: ECE/HBP COMMITTEE FINAL REPORT, APPROVED AFTERNOON SEPT. 11, CLEARLY IMPLIED THAT STUDY TOUR IN USSR NOT ECE FUNCTION. WITHDRAWAL OF ECE SPONSORSHIP CONFIRMED BY ECE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY STANOVNIK IN LETTER DELIVERED TO USSR MISSION FRIDAY EVENING. SOVIETS DECLINED TO PROVIDE FREE RIDE FOR ECE SECRETARIAT OFFICIAL IN "UNOFFICIAL" CAPACITY AND NO MEMBERS OF SECRETARIAT PARTICIPATING. OF 14 WESTERN COUNTRIES SCHEDULED TO PARTICIPATE, ALL ARE REPORTED TO HAVE WITHDRAWN WITH POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF SPAIN. YUGOSLAVS ARE ALSO REPORTED TO HAVE WITHDRAWN. END SUMMARY

2. SECTION OF ECE/HBP COMMITTEE REPORT ON STUDY TOUR IN USSR APPROVED ALONG WITH REST OF FINAL REPORT AFTERNOON SEPTEMBER 11. AS PREPARED BY SECRETARIAT, SECTION CONSISTED OF BRIEF SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE' CONSIDERATION OF THIS ISSUE INCLUDING: (PARA 1) INTRODUCTION OF
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CONFERENCE ROOM PAPER APPRISING COMMITTEE THAT USSR

WOULD HAVE "CERTAIN DIFFICULTIES" WITH PARTICIPATION BY NON-MEMBERS OF ECE; (PARA 2) STATEMENT BY EXECUTIVE SECRETARY RE APPLICABILITY OF ARTICLE XI OF ECE TERMS OF REFERENCE; (PARA 3) DECLARATION BY NUMBER OF COUNTRIES THAT THEY WOULD BE UNABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN STUDY TOUR BECAUSE ARTICLE XI NOT OBSERVED; (PARA 4) SUGGESTION BY CHAIRMAN THAT STUDY TOUR NOT BE CONSIDERED OFFICIAL PART OF WORK OF COMMITTEE; AND (PARA 5) STATEMENT BY EXECUTIVE SECRETARY THAT HIS LEGAL OPINION GIVEN EARLIER ANSWERED QUESTION AS TO WHETHER STUDY COULD STILL BE CONSIDERED AN ECE STUDY TOUR.

3. WHILE DRAFT ACCEPTABLE TO WESTERN COUNTRIES, SOVIETS INDICATED THEY INSIST ON INSERTION OF STATEMENTS RE (1) DESCRIPTION OF STUDY BY SOVIET DEL AND (2) WITHDRAWAL OF CHAIRMAN'S SUGGESTION SINCE IT "NOT ACCEPTED" BY COMMITTEE.

4. IN DISCUSSIONS WITH SOVIET DEL, US AND UK DELS STRESSED THAT SECOND ADDITION WOULD ONLY LEAD TO UNFORTUNATE EXCHANGE OF ADDITIONS RE WHETHER STUDY TOUR STILL OFFICIAL ECE ACTIVITY. AGREEMENT EVENTUALLY REACHED TO DELETE CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT WITH NO ADDITIONS EXCEPT FIRST LISTED ABOVE.

5. IN PARAGRAPH BY PARAGRAPH CONSIDERATION OF SECTION, ALL WENT WELL UNTIL END WHEN SOVIET DEL INTRODUCED ADDITIONAL PARAGRAPH STATING THAT "SOVIET DELEGATION AGAIN CONFIRMED ITS PREPAREDNESS TO RECIEVE ALL INVITED PARTIIPANTS IN SOVIET UNION AND A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES EXPRESSED THEIR INTEREST IN THE TOUR".

6. WHILE SOVIET ADDITION SLIGHTLY CHANGED TONE OF SECTION, IT HAD NO EFFECT ON OVERRIDING LEGAL ISSUE, SINCE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S STATEMENTS STILL COMPRISED BULK OF SECTION AND WERE UNCONTESTED. MOREOVER, ISRAELI QUESTION AS TO WHETHER "INVITED PARTICIPANTS" MEANT ECE MEMBERS ONLY AND SOVIET AFFIRMATIVE RESPONSE GAVE EX SEC ONE MORE PEG ON WHICH TO HANG POSITION THAT STUDY TOUR NOT ECE ACTIVITY.
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7. IN LETTER WRITTEN FRIDAY EVEINING TO USSR AUTHORITIES (COPY DELIVERED IMMEDIATELY TO SOVIET MISSION GENEVA) STANOVNIK STATED THAT STUDY TOUR WAS NOW CONSIDERED NATIONAL TOUR, NOT ECE ACTIVITY, BUT THAT SECRETARIAT OFFICIAL (BEN REINER, DEPUTY DIRECTOR ECE ENVIRONMENT AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS DIVISION) WOULD PARTICIPATE IN UNOFFICIAL CAPACITY IN VIEW OF ECE INTEREST IN SUBJECT MATTER.

(PARTICIPATION BY ECE SECRETARIAT OFFICIALS IN NON-ECE ACTIVITIES OF INTEREST IS COMMON PRACTICE.) THIS REJECTED BY SOVIETS, WHO SAID REINER WOULD HAVE TO PAY COST OF TOUR IF HE WISHED TO GO. THEREFORE NO MEMBERS OF ECE SECRETARIAT ARE PARTICIPATING IN STUDY TOUR.

8. STANOVNIK, WHO ADMITTEDLY STUCK OUT HIS NECK IN UNILATERALLY DECIDING THAT STUDY TOUR NOT ECE FUNCTION, RECEIVED SOME PROTECTION FROM SOVIET AX SATURDAY MORNING IN FORM OF TELEGRAM FROM UN LEGAL OFFICE NEW YORK TAKING SAME POSITION.

9. OF 14 WESTERN COUNTRIES ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED TO PARTICIPATE IN STUDY TOUR, ONLY SPAIN MAY HAVE DONE SO. (SPANISH MISSION REPORTS SPANISH DEL APPARENTLY LEFT GENEVA WITHOUT SAYING WHICH WAY HE WAS GOING.) YUGOSLAV REPS ARE ALSO REPORTED TO HAVE WITHDRAWN.

COMMENT: REASON FOR SOVIET REFUSAL TO ALLOW PARTICIPATION BY ISRAELI REP IN STUDY TOUR IS STILL MATTER OF CONJECTURE HERE. PREVAILING VIEW ORIGINALLY WAS THAT PROBLEM WAS RESULT OF BUREAUCRATIC FOUL-UP. WITHDRAWAL OF IRAQI REGISTRATION FOR STUDY TOUR (ON AUG 27) AND FAILURE OF EGYPTIANS TO APPEAR AT HBP COMMITTEE AFTER SEVERAL YEARS OF PARTICIPATION IN CONSULTATIVE CAPACITY LED OTHERS TO SPECULATE THAT SOVIET MOVE WAS WELL PLANNED. (EGYPT, LIBYA AND SAUDI ARABIA PARTICIPATED IN 1975 ECE /HBP STUDY TOUR IN SPAIN.) EARLY IN WEEK SOVIET MISSION OFFICIALS AND MEMBER OF SOVIET DEL SEEMED HOPEFUL AND EVEN CONFIDENT THAT DECISION WOULD BE REVERSED. THIS MOOD CHANGED DECISIVELY THURSDAY MORNING. FACT THAT MATTER APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN CONSIDERED AT HIGH LEVELS IN MOSCOW AND THAT REFUSAL CONFIDENTIAL

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TO GRANT ISRAELI VISA WAS UPHOLD SUPPORTS VIEW THAT REFUSAL WAS DELIBERATE POLICY DECISION AND QUESTION NOW ARISES WHETHER SAME ACTION WILL BE TAKEN BY USSR AND OTHER EASTERN EUROPEAN IN SUBSEQUENT UN ACTIVITIES IN THOSE COUNTRIES. ATTITUDE IN ECE SECRETARIAT AT MOMENT IS TO PLAY DOWN INCIDENT TO ELICIT PRESSURE FROM UN NEW YORK TO COMPLETE AGREEMENTS WITH HOST COUNTRIES WELL IN ADVANCE OF ACTIVITIES AWAY FROM HEADQUARTERS. THIS WOULD CAUSE SOME DIFFICULTY FOR SEVERAL COUNTRIES, INCLUDING US, WHICH HAS REPEATEDLY FAILED TO CONCLUDE AGREEMENTS WITH ECE IN ADVANCE OF ACTIVITIES HELD IN US BECAUSE OF DIFFERENCES OVER QUESTIONS LARGELY OF FINANCIAL/ADMINISTRATIVE NATURE. ECE MAY BE EXPECTED TO RESIST SUCH "OVERKILL". MISSION BELIEVES, HOWEVER, THAT ECE SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO SEEK ASSURANCES THAT HOSTS FOR FUTURE ECE ACTIVITIES

WILL COMPLY WITH PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE XI AND PLANS
PRESS FOR SUCH ACTION AS OPPORTUNITY ARISES. END COMMENT.
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